

over-the-air broadcast channels, but also subscribe to cable, or own a home satellite receiver. With telephone company entry into the video marketplace, American consumers will have additional options from which to choose their programming. Despite all these advances in technology broadcasting should remain a vital component in the information age. Broadcast television occupies a unique position in the world of telecommunications. Broadcasting is not only the only technology available to 100 percent of American households, the content it provides is free. The only cost is for a receiver.

The bill does the following: First, states that the FCC shall not prescribe or enforce rules limiting crossownership of mediums of mass communications; second, increases the aggregate national audience reach from 25 to 35 percent upon enactment. One year later allows the cap to increase to 50 percent. The bill contains a built-in safeguard; within 2 years of enactment of the bill, the FCC is to commission a study to ensure competition in the marketplace; third, the bill allows certain station ownership combinations in a market: UHF/UHF; UHF/VHF and if the Commission determines that it will not harm competition and will not harm the preservation of a diversity of voices in the local market, VHF/VHF combinations; fourth, the bill also repeals all radio ownership restrictions.

I might add that this bill will be presented as an amendment to the communications act of 1995, which has the full support of Chairman BLILEY and Chairman FIELDS and as previously mentioned, it is bipartisan.

CONGRATULATING CHERYL
STEVENS, HONOR ROLL TEACHER

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 1995

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Cheryl D. Stevens, of Roberts Elementary School in Houston, TX. Ms. Stevens has been named by the Association of Science-Technology Centers to its 1995 Honor Roll of Teachers.

The Children's Museum of Houston, which nominated Ms. Stevens for the honor roll, recognized her remarkable dedication to the world of science and teaching. Ms. Stevens excels in both at Roberts Elementary, where she teaches science to kindergarten through fifth graders. She and her students are participants in Science-by-Mail, a pen pal program designed to match fourth through ninth graders with scientists around the country. Over 20,000 kids and 20,000 teachers are involved in Science-by-Mail. In addition to Science-by-Mail's regular pen pal program, Ms. Stevens and her classes have participated in a special Science-by-Mail teleconference, Teltrain XI, a video town meeting televised around the country for scientists and students.

Ms. Stevens is also active in the Annual Meet Your Scientist Day, which will take place this year on Saturday, May 6, 1995. Over 300 school children will meet with scientists to learn more about the world of science and technology. This year, Ms. Stevens will be honored for her recognition as one of ASTC's honor roll teachers for 1995.

Ms. Stevens is a member of the Magic School Bus Advisory Committee, sponsored by the National Science Foundation and the Children's Museum of Houston. She also works actively on the Science and Technology Committee and the Building Blocks for a Healthy Classroom Conference at the museum.

Only 43 teachers were named to the 10th annual ASTC's honor roll. Each teacher has gone beyond the normal requirements of their school curriculum by using the resources of their local science center to inspire, educate, and stimulate students' interest in science and technology. I salute Ms. Stevens on her accomplishments and especially for her commitment to teaching. She is an outstanding role model for Houston's teachers and students. Her placement on ASTC's Honor Roll of Teachers is well-deserved.

OPENING OF THE SPECIAL EXHIBIT
"DEFENDING RELIGIOUS
LIBERTY"

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 1995

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to speak out for religious freedom.

The worldwide religion known as the Baha'i Faith is one of the most peace-loving groups in the world—and yet one of the most consistently persecuted.

The Baha'i Faith began in Persia in the 1840's, and spread rapidly through the Middle East, where Islam has historically been dominant. Though the Baha'i Faith now has adherents all around the world, including all 50 States of the United States, its historic links to the Mideast have helped bring it repeatedly into conflict with Islam.

Islam, like most other world religions, teaches certain truths that its adherents take to be absolute. Baha'is take a different approach, seeing all religions as successive revelations, each with a partial truth.

These questions are faced, one way or another, by all men and women of conscience. And it is inevitable that many of us will come out differently on these questions. In decent societies—in free societies—we respect each other's freedom of conscience. If we seek to persuade one another, we do it in friendship, and with respect.

But in some parts of the world, force is still used to settle religious issues. In Iran, with its extremist regime, the fact that the Baha'is question Islam's claim to represent God's full and final revelation makes them a target of unceasing persecution. The fact that the Baha'i Faith arose on territory in which Islam has been dominant for some 1,400 years, and among ethnic groups with a long Islamic heritage, seems to be an unbearable irritant to the Iranian regime. They view the Baha'is as worse than mere adherents of another religion—which, in their eyes, is quite bad enough. They view them as something worse: as heretics, as conscious destroyers of Islam.

For those of us who have met Baha'i believers—even those of us who come from a religious perspective quite different from theirs—the notion that they would be destroyers of anything is simply absurd.

Yet Baha'is in Iran have no legal rights, despite being the largest religious minority in that country. More than 200 Iranian Baha'is, including women and teenage girls, have been executed for their faith since 1979. Thousands have faced torture and imprisonment for refusing to convert to Islam. Tens of thousands have lost their jobs, and been forced to repay past salaries or pensions. All Baha'i students were expelled from Iranian universities by 1982.

President Clinton has placed Iran's treatment of its Baha'i minority on a par with ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia. Given the professed intention of the Iranian regime to block the progress and development of the Baha'i Faith, I would have to agree with the President on this.

I salute my colleagues for sponsoring this exhibition on the persecution of the Baha'i Faith community. I hope it will inspire all who see it to stand up for religious freedom.

Thank you very much.

A SALUTE TO SMALL BUSINESS
WEEK

HON. KWESI MFUME

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 1995

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind my colleagues, as well as the American public, that the week beginning April 30 is National Small Business Week, and I would like to take this opportunity to discuss small and minority-owned businesses and the role they play in our economy.

Not all Americans realize how important small businesses are to our national economy. Although the definition of a small business is sometimes varied, the fact of the matter is that firms with less than 100 employees account for more than 98 percent of the Nation's enterprises. Furthermore, between September 1991 and September 1992, jobs in small business dominated industries increased by 177,700 which helped to offset the 400,000 job decrease in industries dominated by large businesses.

While nonminority men still own the lion's share of small businesses and still represent the largest number of sales, minority- and women-owned businesses are increasing in size and number. Minority-owned businesses have increased from approximately 380,000 in 1969 to 1.5 million today. Despite this increase, however, minorities are still not fairly represented in small business ownership; while minorities comprise nearly 20 percent of the total U.S. population, they own less than 9 percent of American businesses.

In addition to playing an important role in the national economy, minority- and women-owned businesses also tend to play important roles in their communities. In many poor, urban communities, minority-owned businesses are often the only commercial establishments available. Furthermore, as was demonstrated in a recent Department of labor study, minority- and women-owned businesses are more likely to hire minorities and women than are businesses owned by nonminority men. In short, minority- and women-owned